

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
other names/site number N/A

## 2. Location

street & number Northeast corner of North Hassen and West Kyle streets N/A  not for publication  
city or town Rogersville N/A  vicinity  
stat Tennessee code TN county Hawkins code 073 zip code 37857  
e \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
Name of Property

Hawkins County, Tennessee  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Historic Rural African American Churches in Tennessee, 1850-1970

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Shingle Style

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick  
walls Cedar shake  
roof Asphalt shingle  
other Glass

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** N/A

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Ethnic Heritage – African American
- \_\_\_\_\_ Architecture
- \_\_\_\_\_ Education
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

\_\_\_\_\_ 1912-1955 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_ 1912 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

\_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_ Unknown \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):** N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
Name of Property

Hawkins County, Tennessee  
County and State

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreeage of Property** Less than one acre Camelot, Tenn 171 NE

### UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 17 319942 4031043  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Ella Jo Bradley; Vice Chairman  
organization Hawkins County Board of Education date 11/30/2005  
street & number 249 Holston View Drive telephone 423-272-8079  
city or town Rogersville state TN zip code 37857

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### Additional Documentation

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submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

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### Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Hawkins County Board of Education, c/o Ella Jo Bradley, Vice Chairman  
street & number 200 North Depot Street telephone 423-272-3455  
city or town Rogersville state TN zip code 37857

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
Hawkins County, Tennessee

## Narrative Description

St. Marks Presbyterian Church, built in 1912, is located in Rogersville, Tennessee (pop. 4,283) at the corner of Hassen and Kyle streets, just outside the boundary of the Rogersville Historic District (NR 2/23/73). This is an unusual example of an African American church clad with decorative patterned wood shingles. The elegant simplicity of the architectural style, the stained glass windows depicting pastoral scenes, and the extraordinary shingle siding, all maintain the dignity, integrity and beauty of the church.

Two easily identifiable sections of St. Marks Church are visible on all facades. The white-shingled upper half of the building is the sanctuary. The lower section is the foundation that serves as a basement. The top portion of the walls, as well as the tower, is covered with patterned wood shingles of varying shape, and the bottom portion of the walls is red stained brick made locally in Rogersville. The wood shingles are arranged in alternating rows of rounded, square and 'V' shaped shingles. It has been estimated that the brick foundation walls are three to four layers thick. The front gable roof is clad with asphalt shingles. A rectangular bell tower emerges from the southwest corner of the building and is topped with a pyramidal roof. At one time a small spire was located at the apex of the tower. The spire was removed during a re-roofing project circa 1990. The south and west sides of the tower each have rectangular louvered vents.

The front, or south, façade faces Kyle Street. This façade features two main entries. Each entry has seven-panel wood double doors topped by stained glass transoms. The entries are flanked by engaged paneled posts that support small gable roofs located over each entry. A central set of stairs leads from the sidewalk to a small landing. Two sets of stairs then lead from the landing to the two entries. Three sets of window units are located between the entries in a bay that projects slightly from the wall. A pair of historic one-over-one double-hung sash windows is located on the basement level. A rectangular stained glass unit is located in the lower half of the wood shingled wall. This unit is composed of a central stained glass window flanked by two smaller ones. A third window unit is located in the upper portion of the sanctuary directly above the stained glass unit. The third unit has two fifteen pane windows flanked by rectangular stained glass windows. A small attic vent is in the gable end.

The west façade has five regularly spaced arched single pane windows in the upper wood shingled section. These openings originally held stained glass windows, but they were removed and replaced following a tornado on April 4, 1974. The stained glass windows have been retained and are stored in the building. The basement level on this façade has three secondary entries. Each entry has a replacement six-panel door. Two one-over-one double-hung sash windows are approximately centered on the brick portion of this façade. A small single pane window is located at the top of the brick foundation wall on the south end of the west façade. At the bottom of the foundation wall is the cornerstone, which reads: "St Marks Presbyterian Church W H Franklin DD 1912."

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St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
Hawkins County, Tennessee

The north façade has two arched window openings on the sanctuary level. The windows are separated by an exterior brick chimney. The easternmost window has stained glass. The westernmost window has been partially covered with plywood and also houses an air-conditioning unit. The basement level has a one-over-one double-hung sash window east of the chimney, and an opening west of the chimney that has been boarded over.

The east façade has four arched stained glass windows in the upper level. A fifth window opening located south of these windows has been boarded over. The brick basement level on this façade has four historic one-over-one double-hung sash windows. A six-panel door is in an entry north of the windows. A brick chimney is located near the northeast corner.

The main entries on the south façade each open to a small landing with stairs leading up to the main level. The eastern entry landing also has stairs leading down to the basement. The stairs have plain rectangular newel posts and a square-post balustrade. The walls have wood paneling below a molded chair rail. The walls above the chair rail are plaster. Molded baseboards are also visible in the entry landings. The chair rails and baseboards are all original features of the church. Each of the stairs leads up to a set of five-panel double doors that open into the sanctuary. Additionally there is a single door at the top of each staircase that leads to an alcove at the rear of the sanctuary. The staircases are lit by original white opalescent globe lights that hang from the ceiling on long chains.

The alcove and sanctuary are separated by a partition wall, which contains a central set of pocket doors. The walls are covered with wood paneling that was added in 1982, and the floor is carpeted. The original dark wood ceiling in these areas was lowered slightly and covered with acoustical tiles in 1973. The sanctuary has original dark wood wainscoting, baseboards and trim. The trim around the doors and windows is plain and unadorned.

The alcove, historically used for overflow seating and late arrivals, contains several rows of curved wood pews. The south wall of the alcove is dominated by a large stained-glass unit that depicts a pastoral scene. Below the pastoral scene is found the name of the church's founder, Dr. Franklin, and the date 1912. The sanctuary has a central aisle and two sections of curved wood pews. The ends of the pews are adorned with a carved pointed arch design. These pews are not original to the church, but are antique donations from another church. The layout of the pews is identical to the original plan. Three arched stained-glass windows are located in the east wall of the sanctuary.

The pulpit is located on a curved raised platform on the north end of the sanctuary. There is a room on either side of the pulpit area. A small room east of the pulpit area is used as the pastor's study and the room west of the pulpit is used as a choir room. The choir room still contains one of the original pews.

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St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
Hawkins County, Tennessee

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The basement of St. Mark's Presbyterian is primarily divided into two large spaces. The eastern room has a narrow staircase in the southeast corner that leads up to a landing inside a main entrance door. The staircase has a square-post balustrade and a simple rectangular newel post. This room has four one-over-one double-hung windows and one exterior door. The brick walls are covered with plaster that is cracked and crumbling. Vinyl linoleum covers the floor. A wide molded baseboard runs the length of the room. A small closet is located in the southwest corner of the room. North of this room is a small kitchen that is no longer used. Cabinets line the north and east walls. Additionally this room has a one-over-one double-hung sash window on the north wall and a rough finished concrete floor.

A small utility room is located west of the kitchen. The utility room has a bare earthen floor. A small wood-burning stove is located in the northwest corner of the room. A small window opening on the north wall is boarded over, and an exterior door is on the west wall. Unlike the other rooms in the basement the brick walls in this room are not covered with plaster.

South of the utility room is a second large space. This room has brick walls covered with wood paneling and wood floors covered with linoleum. Three large wood support beams stand across the center of the room. Two one-over-one double-hung windows and two exterior doors are located on the west wall. South of this room are two bathrooms that were added in 1979. The bathrooms contain modern fixtures.

The church is set in a mostly residential area, just one block from Main Street and downtown Rogersville. It rests on the corner of Kyle and Hassen streets and is very near the edge of the sidewalks. The ground slopes up slightly on the north and east sides of the building.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
Hawkins County, Tennessee

## Statement of Significance

St. Marks Presbyterian Church is eligible for inclusion to the National Register under criteria A for African American ethnic heritage as it relates to education. The church was associated with Swift Memorial College. Through its continuing affiliation with the college, the church held a prominent role in the education of blacks in this northeast Tennessee county. It is also eligible under criteria C for architecture. The 1912 Shingle style church displays an unusual array of multi-shaped wood shingle siding and retains a high level of integrity on the exterior. Rogersville is a community well-known for its nineteenth century architecture, but there are no comparable early twentieth century Shingle style buildings in the city.

Dr. William Henderson Franklin organized St. Marks Presbyterian Church in 1883. Dr. Franklin was born in 1852 in Knoxville, Tennessee. He was the son of slaves, Henderson and Elizabeth (Bates) Franklin. He received his early education in the city's church-operated academies. Franklin was the first African American graduate of Maryville College in Blount County (NR 09/09/82). He entered Lane Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio, and was graduated in 1883.

Upon graduation he was sent to Rogersville by the National Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church to establish a Presbyterian Church and to assist the African American community. He arrived in Rogersville in 1883 and immediately founded St. Marks Presbyterian Church and Swift Memorial Institute. In 1904 Swift Memorial Institute became Swift Memorial College, and then in 1929 it became Swift Memorial Junior College. From the outset St. Marks Church was associated with Swift. Originally church services were held in a building on McKinney Street. In 1912 the church was built at its present location in order to better serve the students of Swift Memorial College. In addition to its affiliation to Swift Memorial College the church welcomed the general public, and was the first church of Presbyterian faith established in the area for black citizens.

Dr. Franklin's desire was to establish a church-affiliated school to assist African American students in attaining an education. When St. Marks Church was built in 1912 at its present location, Dr. Franklin held Bible study and philosophy classes in the sanctuary. The purpose was to inspire young men to learn to read and become ministers. Many African American children could not read and did not have any books. Dr. Franklin taught students to read using the Bible. Instruction in this basic skill was essential in preparing students for further education, and also to help these students to educate later generations of their offspring. At this time Swift Memorial College had a small campus with dormitories and a main building.

From its inception, Dr. Franklin and his successors emphasized that St. Marks would be a church affiliated with an institution of learning. They believed education and religion were inclusive in the quest for African Americans to achieve a higher quality of life. The purpose of St. Marks Presbyterian Church and Swift Memorial College was to serve minority students as they sought an

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St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
Hawkins County, Tennessee

education. This kind of prominent role of churches in the education of African Americans was common during the era of segregation.<sup>1</sup>

The church has two main front entrances. Historically Swift Memorial College ladies used the west entrance and gentlemen used the east entrance. They were seated separately as socializing was forbidden during worship service. All students were encouraged to dress appropriately. Jeans and tennis shoes were replaced with dress shoes, trousers, and neckties for gentlemen. Dresses, hats, hose and sometime gloves were considered appropriate attire for ladies. Attendance of worship services at St. Marks twice weekly was mandatory for all students and faculty.

Dr. Franklin retired in 1926. Dr. Charles E. Tucker, a minister from Chattanooga was his successor. Other pastors of St. Marks include Rev. Charles Hargrave, Rev. Ewing, Rev. Gray, Rev. Ellis, Rev. Anderson, Rev. Washington, Rev. Martin R. Flack, Rev. Joseph Blackmore and Rev. Isaac Rakestraw. All ministers of St. Marks Church received their training at Swift Memorial College.

Dr. Franklin died in October 1935. His funeral services were held in St. Marks Presbyterian Church. During his life Dr. Franklin was noted as a highly respected writer and speaker, and had gained a great amount of esteem throughout the community. "During the funeral services most of the businesses and offices of the small Tennessee town were closed. It is reported that the entire city and county took on an air of mourning as the news of the educator's death went around."<sup>2</sup> This kind of show of widespread community respect was unheard of for an African American at the time in Rogersville. He is buried alongside his wife in a plot on the Swift College campus northeast of the church.

St. Marks continued to be actively affiliated with Swift Memorial College until 1955 when the college closed due to financial difficulties. The property associated with the college, including St. Marks Church was subsequently sold to Hawkins County in 1956. Verbal permission was given for the local congregation to continue using the church as long as the congregation had a need for it, but no contractual agreement was signed. Additionally a day care center was conducted in the basement from 1973 to 1979. Declining membership forced the church to close its doors in May of 2000. St. Marks Church has been vacant since that time.

St. Marks is located just outside the boundary of the Rogersville Historic District, which is characterized by a fine collection of nineteenth century buildings. The most prevalent architectural styles in the area are Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate and Queen Anne. The Shingle style of St. Marks Church is unusual in this area. The stained glass windows and Shingle style exterior are

<sup>1</sup> Carroll Van West. "Historic Rural African-American Churches in Tennessee, 1850-1970" National Register Multiple Property Submission.

<sup>2</sup> *Knoxville Public Guide*, October 31, 1935.

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St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
Hawkins County, Tennessee

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extraordinary features found in few church buildings for African American worshippers during a time of economic struggles.

Many of the buildings in the adjacent Rogersville Historic District are handsome red brick buildings built in classical or Victorian period styles. The area boasts several notable early nineteenth century buildings such as the Hale Springs Inn (built 1824-25), the Greek Revival style Masonic Temple (c. 1840), and the Federal style Kyle House (c. 1830). The patterned wood shingle exterior of the church stands in contrast to the other buildings in the area in terms of material and style, giving St. Marks Church its own distinct character of dignity and gracefulness.

Shingle style of architecture was most common in the last decades of the nineteenth century. This style is distinguished by exterior wall covering with wood shingles, steeply pitched rooflines, and irregular wall surfaces. Commonly large extensive porches are also found. The Shingle style is largely found in the New England region and vernacular examples of the style, such as St. Marks, are fairly rare in East Tennessee.

The majority of the Shingle style features of the building are still in place. The intact patterned wood shingle siding, dual front entrances, and stained-glass windows give the building a high degree of integrity.

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St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
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Patrick, James. *Architecture in Tennessee; 1768-1897*. University of Tennessee Press: Knoxville, 1981.

Poppeliers, John, et al. *What Style Is It?* The Preservation Press: Washington DC, 1983.

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Urquart, Rita Ann. *History of Swift Memorial College*. East Tennessee State University: Johnson City, TN, 1992.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 8

St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
Hawkins County, Tennessee

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## Boundary Description

The property is located on the southwest corner of parcel 015.00 in group C on tax map 100L in Hawkins County. The National Register boundary consists of the footprint of the building.

## Boundary Justification

The boundary contains property currently associated with St. Marks Church.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
Hawkins County, Tennessee

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## Photographs

St. Marks Presbyterian Church  
Rogersville, TN  
Photographs by Randy Ball  
Photos taken on December 29, 2004  
Negatives at Tennessee Historical Commission

Southwest corner of church showing south and west facades and tower. Photographer facing northeast.

1 of 11

Detail of south façade showing wood shingle siding and stained glass window. Photographer facing north.

2 of 11

Southeast corner of church. Photographer facing northwest.

3 of 11

West façade. Photographer facing east.

4 of 11

Detail of east façade showing wood shingle siding and stained glass windows. Photographer facing west.

5 of 11

Interior showing pulpit. Photographer facing northeast.

6 of 11

Interior of sanctuary. Photographer facing southeast.

7 of 11

Interior of sanctuary. Photographer facing northwest.

8 of 11

Interior of sanctuary and alcove. Photographer facing south.

9 of 11

Detail of stained glass window. Photographer facing south.

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Northwest corner of church. Photographer facing southeast.

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# **National Register of Historic Places**

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